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Full of Indigo

Owen Medgyesy
Winthrop University

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Fifty odd minutes had passed me by and gravel crushed beneath the wheels of the car. House. I crawled into my green and brown hammock feeling like a child while everyone ran on inside. The litter of backyard bird-feeders were some of my father's only good ideas. Twenty species chopping amongst the seed. Finches, robins alike churning and ticking like one green grandfather clock that beat into the ground (with an earthy heart). All the cardinals, like dear brothers, suspended in the gnarled and flaky cedars. Blue jays yelled like war bombers.

--He knows what it is to be saved.

--Honey, he's six years old.

--Why are you actin like he doesn't? I'm proud a' him. He hears Grandpappy and Grandmama speak on it. He knows.

--Even if he does, don't go blowin it up everywhere. I don't care if he understands, that's good, but stop talkin your mouth about it.

This was Easter in all its prepubescent glory: a saved and conscious six-year-old, an old white squealing Baptist preacher, and me, Godless like the Devil.

March 28th, the adjacent day. I woke this morning like a dam. All holes of my body jammed up and snotty. My mouth dry as red clay and sticking to my tongue. My closed eyes felt glued to my skull and red haze static sparkled in them. I got up, snot pouring out of my Hungarian nose. 6:37 a.m. The front room was one of cold and sombre darkness. Humble tip-toed steps with a cold plastic cup of water held in my large right hand brought my body to the black leather sofa. I sipped for a minute. I got back up without the water and brewed an old bag of tea and sat back down. Eyes saw symmetry wall door blinds wall. It was a little beautiful, like the tired rays of resting sunlight collapsing through the flaky windowsills at my father's house after my parent's divorce. It was his first home after the divorce. Mine too. The tea is chamomile. I added too much water and the stale tea leaves tasted like dishwater. I sip from it, the day trying to materialize in the head.

My clothes here are too small and old and smell bad. I want to give them away. 6:50 a.m. Under the sink, a musky gray crawlspace that I would live under if I were a troll and had long greasy fingers, housed the trashbags. I stuck my hand in without looking plucking a thin white membrane

from the cupboard. My neck hurt from sleeping so poorly and the muscles ache. I scurried to my car with a white trashbag full of old small clothes. The cloth seats holding my body shivered beneath me. Fifty-seven degrees. These Days sprays through my car. It felt right enough. A sort of early Spring in the body. The yellow pollen seeding, trying to germinate like everything in the world. Nevermore, I putted down the backroads. Scent of mild pine, trailers, and the Confederacy. Single-wide trailer: young woman, maybe 20, propping the front door open with the right half of her body while the left half smokes a cigarette, her stringy long wet brown hair hangs off her head, she shouts something inside, perhaps a warning to her diapered son or elderlyish mother whom she is the last daughter of. Scent of pine is more pronounced as the procession of skinny douglas firs grabs my car at thirty-five miles per hour.

Who could tell you that speeding past a cemetery is sinful? It's wrong in many cases except for mine. My great-grandfather was buried out there. He was a racist farmer who died of lung cancer and being an anti-federalist. He believed in God even though he was short and hated to admit it. So I always speed past him. Or at least let the engine roar. Listen to that engine scream past you, ya old bastard. I might shake hands in shame.

The small amount of gasoline in my tank sloshed around like it always does as I pulled up in front of the Helping Hands Thrift Store on main street. My father's town is a small pocket-watch held in the dress pants of white men under a tree of strange fruits. It is a small town. Lots of poverty and white people. I turn my car off in excitement for my own low-budget materialism to kick in. Floorboards ache and the raspy bell hanging above the door shakes like an old widow holding flowers for her dead husband. Musk and dust and power sweep through the room like a broad set of manly shoulders. It smells like the South. I first drop off the white sack of clothes I was so eager to rid myself of, then skim my way around the size thirty-nine camouflage bathingsuits, the abnormally truncated white t-shirts, and one hat that stinks like hot oil. The shoes: Reeboks from the early 1980s, cheap flip-flops, cleats from the local middle school's running back, and a pair of dark leather and light suede dress sandals. I panned back around towards the front end of the store and notice a hysterical machine working with cogs and cloth. There is now twenty people up front tossing bags of

clothes around, handing hotel paintings to a neighbor, sorting innumerable romance novels into red dry bins, and a hefty woman huffing and sweating as she helps move a floral loveseat in the store with a college volunteer. I turn back around and slowly weigh down the floorboards to the books. I pick up and thumb through some 1940s picturebook and decide it is good. I buy it for a modest price and become happy. As I walk back out of the store, I feel increasingly embarrassed by eyes. Growls in my throat rumble up like small hollow vomit.

I crossed back over main street. Nearly hit by a drunk man in a powder blue truck who is probably half blind and breathes from half a lung. The air is dry and gray like the soggy bits of bruised skin laid out on asphalt. I felt cut open and wide. My car starts, waking me up. There's a man, just across the railroad tracks, maybe one-hundred and fifty feet who looks like he's yelling. Not like the type of yelling where you yell because of joy. He yelled and screamed and pointed at the white brick house like the house had a gun. The man at the doorstep of that house had a gun. My eyes zoomed in: a white metalled pistol, Smith and Wesson, 357. That's a big man's pistol. A pretty little shooting gun. The man holding the revolver pointed at the pointing man like a western cowboy, his body in-line with the aims. My mouth is agape, heart pounding skin, I sweat carefully. And, real slow, the gun fires and the bullet meanders at the pointing man at a great speed. His chest is hit

I am returned at the house. Bluegrass music swirls around the yard.

-The beauty of the American West bleeding like a fool in the ground!

The air was mild and smelled of paprika. Barbed pieces of skinny wire in the cloth couch made my lips hurt. I thought of the pain and where it came from. Its silver bitterness building and sloshing in my lips like little circles. I close my eyes and I could see: the brand new blue of the setting sun where my body was in the grass. I feel the grass. I go back outside because I missed it. It was here. The shining red clay and the small grass like fingers under the late baking sun. Forever I thought, the sun. I stand to it now with my arms paling and the ticking hands beeping like night cicadas on the bottom bunk of my bed. Skin shining to the sun, here I am shoning backwards to you. Orange blossoming just below the telephone wires, I sank back into the grass and sighed.